

LABOUR MONTHLY

A Magazine of Labour Unity

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Editor : R. Palme Dutt

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GREAT ALLIES



*There's not a breathing of the common wind
That will forget thee; thou has great allies;
Thy friends are exultations, agonies,
And love, and man's unconquerable mind.*

WHEN WORDSWORTH wrote this of Toussaint L'Ouverture, the great Negro leader of the West Indies was within months of dying in Napoleon's prison. Inspired by the Revolution's slogan *liberté, égalité, fraternité*, he had led the slaves of Haiti to brilliant victory over the French planters. But when the White Terror took power in France, the undefeated Toussaint was trapped by trickery. While he pined in gaol, the white colonists were once more free to see to it that liberty was labelled 'for white men only' in his homeland. Now 150 years on, the great fighter for independence is honoured by the peoples of Honduras, Guiana and of every land where British, French and American imperialism today goes in terror of its victims. While the spirit of Toussaint lives, it is the working class all over the world who are assured of 'great allies'. So it is good to note in our fund list a tribute for *British Guiana* 'in memory of Toussaint L'Ouverture'. That it comes from American readers is a reminder that the love of freedom cannot be 'contained' anywhere.

It is always a pleasure and pride to hear how overseas readers value L.M. From *Nigeria*: 'I've been a reader for a few months and cannot

adequately express how profoundly impressed I've been. I thought I should show appreciation by doing my little bit in supporting the good cause'. Our Nigerian friend's gift is 'for the fight for peace by L.M.' Far removed in space, but neighbours in outlook, another link: an English reader tells of regularly posting L.M. 'to some of my friends in *India*, who meet to read it aloud to the villagers'. (Universal literacy was not a legacy of British Rule). Such fraternal exchanges, of course, work both ways: a Scottish reader describes how he first saw L.M. 'at an Indian shop in *Kenya* nine years ago. Ever since I chanced on that copy, I would not be without it'.

The Engineering Workshop

IS IT such a far cry from the *West Indies, Nigeria, India* and *Kenya* to *Essex*? Not in a labour movement stronghold. For we heard too from a group of 20 readers in an Essex engineering workshop. One passed this note round his fellow readers: 'You have now long been a reader of the LABOUR MONTHLY and I feel confident that the analysis of current events and the guidance given to the working class thereon in the *Notes of the Month* are fully appreciated by you, and the various literary contributions that appear in its pages.'

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Notes of the Month

The Party of Victory

'Things are moving none the less. The only thing is that the "practical" English will be the last to arrive, but when they do arrive their contribution will weigh quite heavy in the scale.'

ENGELS, letter to G. V. Plekhanov, May 21, 1894.

THE approaching Communist Party Congress at Easter offers the opportunity for a serious review of the present problems and future perspective of the labour movement in Britain. That there is an acute crisis of policy and leadership within the labour movement is visible to all. Toryism in its third year is not only sharpening its offensive against the people, as shown in the rents offensive, and against the colonial peoples; it is not only proclaiming the most reckless war programme of rearmament of German militarism, offensive atomic war and even possible germ warfare; at the same time it is slightly increasing its measure of electoral support as shown in the test of recent by-elections. Within the Labour Party the division on German rearmament, when the dominant leadership could only secure a majority of two among the parliamentary representatives (probably a minority of elected repre-

sentatives, since Labour peers were included in the vote) is only the latest evidence of the deep divisions on policy. When Mr. Deakin can announce the prospect of a slump, and draw from this the conclusion that Toryism should remain in office and that a Labour Government is undesirable; when Sir Waldron Smithers can welcome Mr. Morrison as a new disciple and recruit; then it must be obvious to the most moderate that there is something wrong on top. The menace of the economic situation or of the drive to war alarms all thoughtful people. There is a stirring in the trade unions and in the divisional labour parties. But there is no sign yet of any decisive changes of policy or leadership to meet the present urgent needs. This is a situation which calls for the frankest discussion and for critical constructive contributions to discussion from all who are concerned for the future. Towards such discussion the Communist Party Congress will have its contribution to make for the aims of the strengthening, advance, unity and victory, not of a section, but of the entire labour movement, and therefore for the whole future of Britain.

A Test Battle

On the eve of the Communist Party Congress there has taken place in March the victory of the electricians' prolonged and strategically directed strike action on the electrical contracting sites for wage increases. The significance of this outcome lay, not in the figure of the wage increases won, which were roughly comparable to those conceded in other sections of industry, largely as a result of the electricians' action, nor in the extent of the conflict, which was limited, but in the recognised key character of the battle. This was the first victory for a generation of a national and official strike carried through to a finish (so far as the first round goes) against the resistance of the employers. It was the electricians' strike initiated in August of last year which led the way in challenging the proclaimed stand of the Government and employers at that time to refuse all further wage increases. It was their action which helped to stimulate the subsequent militant moves of the engineers and railwaymen. The engineers' 24 hours national token strike and threat of further action, and the railwaymen's threat of a national strike compelled wage concessions. But the electrical employers, backed by the Government and the whole employing class, dug their feet in. This was the chosen test field of battle against a militant union. The battle ended in the capitulation of the employers, who found themselves compelled, under the pressure of

continuing strike action, to concede the very terms which the union had previously proposed and which they had refused. Militancy and 100 per cent. solidarity won the day. This victory was in glaring contrast to the parallel decline of the Labour proportion of the vote in favour of Toryism at the concurrent series of by-elections. In this contrast is mirrored the problem of the present situation in Britain, of the present stage of the class struggle, and of the present stage of the working-class movement—the problems which will be the concern of the coming Communist Party Congress.

Victory

Under the title 'Victory' the editorial of *Reynolds News* of March 14 emphasised the wider significance of the electricians' achievement as a blow struck for the whole working class. After excoriating the Fleet Street gossip of 'Red Plots', unprincipled attacks on Communist leaders, and imaginative inventions of dissent among the rank and file, *Reynolds News* underlined the '100 per cent. support from the rank and file', and continued:

All credit to the leaders. . . . They have done more than win a wage increase for their members. They have inflicted a major defeat on the Government's policy of cutting the real value of wages by forcing up the cost of living while supporting the employers in their resistance to wage claims.

They have struck a blow for the engineers, shipyard, building and other workers who are making parallel wage claims.

And they have struck a blow for Britain.

Well said, *Reynolds News*. But the significance is even wider, if the full implications of this tribute are thought to a conclusion in relation to the present policy and tasks of the working-class movement for the fight against Toryism, and in contrast to the present attempted excommunication of Communists in the political field. The contrast between the two pictures is inescapable. On the one side, militant leadership—100 per cent. solidarity of the rank and file—victory. On the other side, anti-Communist leadership—division, excommunications and purges—defeat.

Press Libels

Fleet Street sought to brand the electricians' strike as a 'Communist plot' and the Electrical Trades Union as a 'Communist union', because the organised electrical workers of Britain, representing all political outlooks, had democratically elected Communists to certain responsible leading positions, and had consistently

sponsored and voted for militant working-class policies against the General Council's policies of the cold war or the wage freeze. The label is a lie. Like every trade union, the E.T.U. organises all workers within its sphere irrespective of political opinions. Its constitution is democratic—more democratic than many of the unions where the right wing prevails. It has a long militant and progressive record. If the membership, who thirty years ago elected Citrine to its leadership, have today elected Communists to leading positions, and after trying them, have re-elected them with overwhelming increased majorities or even without opposition, this was not a political vote on the question of Communism as such (although the anti-Communist appeal was freely used by the capitalist press and the right wing to influence the election against them), but an expression of confidence in these men on the basis of their records as tried, trusted and capable representatives of the interests of the electrical workers. Communism was not irrelevant; for the Communism of these men was the expression of their militant working class and socialist outlook, and in turn helped to strengthen their knowledge and understanding. But Communism was not the issue.

And a Boomerang

Now, however, the Fleet Street abuse becomes a boomerang. For if a trade union leadership, which Fleet Street chooses to describe as a 'Communist leadership', turns out to have led the only victorious strike of any union for a generation, then it is inevitable that the average trade unionist will draw conclusions. Many trade unionists, who are by no means Communists, may draw the conclusion: if only we could have such leadership in other unions. More. They might also draw the conclusion: If only we could have such leadership in the General Council, the employers would have to sing to a different tune, and we might not have to be suffering the steady fall in real wages alongside soaring profits. More. They might even draw the conclusion: if only we could have such leadership in the Labour Party, Toryism would be finished and we could begin to think about the advance to socialism. When such conclusions begin to arise from the experience of daily events in the minds of increasing numbers of trade unionists and Labour Party workers, the conditions are gathering for great changes. The vote of 162,396 miners for a Communist as President, as against 348,391 for his opponent, or nearly one in three of the vote, despite the fullest barrage of the capitalist press and right wing Labour machine to arouse anti-Communist prejudice, is also a sign of the times. The ice is break-

ing. The right-wing servants of capitalism still control the top machine, fulminate against the left, fling out their thunderbolts of expulsions and threats of discipline. But experience teaches. The signals of the future stage of advance of the working-class movement cannot be ignored.

A World Contrast

For the contrast cuts deeper and extends further than the immediate short-term experience which has so strikingly illuminated it on the eve of the Communist Party Congress. The contrast which is here mirrored in a close and narrow focus in immediate conditions in Britain is reproduced on a larger canvas, and in relation to the basic choice of capitalism or socialism, throughout the world. Since the first victory of the working class and socialism thirty-seven years ago we have now travelled through a wealth of experience of the most diverse conditions in the varying countries of the world. Socialism has been established, or is in process of being built up, with the land and main large scale productive resources taken out of the hands of the big capitalists and landlords, over one third of the world. Over two thirds of the world the capitalists and landlords, whether native or in the shape of foreign imperialists, still prevail. The victory of socialism has only been possible where Communism, that is, specifically the science of Marxism-Leninism, embodied in the vanguard organisation of the Communist Party, leads the majority of the working class and of the people. Wherever anti-Communist leadership prevails in the working class, there also the capitalists and landlords prevail. This has now been established through a hundred diverse experiences during one third of a century as a rule without exception. What was previously theory during the nineteenth century has now been tested and proved in practice.

The Key to Victory

'Social Democracy has never succeeded anywhere', proclaimed the Secretary of the Labour Party, Morgan Phillips in 1948, 'and we are now trying to show it can and will be successful' (*Daily Herald*, February 9, 1948). That was six years ago. Today, six years after, the outcome is visible in the present Tory Government, the menacing onset of economic crisis and the mad race to war. The lesson is inescapable, whether on the narrowest plane of immediate day-to-day events in Britain, or on the widest plane of

world events over one third of a century. The union of Communism and the majority of the organised working class is the indispensable condition for the victory of the working class and of socialism in Britain. This is the central problem of the British Labour Movement, underlying all the present crisis of policies and leadership. This is the key problem which will be the concern of the Communist Party Congress, at the same time as it charts the immediate path forward for the entire labour movement to advance in unity against Toryism and for peace and the needs of the people, and through such united action to challenge the existing right-wing domination and prepare the conditions for the future victory of socialism.

Labour's 'Iron Curtain'

To achieve the union of Communism, that is, the scientific theory of socialism, concretely embodied (for it has no meaning unless it is thus concretely embodied) in the organised form of the vanguard political party of the working class based on such theory, or Communist Party, with the mass organisations of the working class, not only in the industrial field, as it is already developing, but in the political field—this must be the governing strategic aim of all who desire the victory of socialism in Britain. There is no other path to such victory. To prevent such union is the parallel strategic aim of the rulers of capitalism in Britain, and of those who serve them in the labour movement; for they know that such union would mean the end of their rule. This is the real heart of the political situation in Britain. Hence the formidable network of bans and regulations and anti-democratic restrictions, the veritable 'iron curtain' erected in the modern era of the labour movement, ever since Marxism took effective organised shape in the Communist Party, to endeavour to prevent even the slightest hint of co-operation or association—a ceaseless labour of Sisyphus, since the Communist Party is no 'outside' 'infiltrating' force, but lives and has its being in the very heart of the industrial working class.

The Cage and the Key

The active body of the working class beats in recurrent waves of revolt against the cage of restriction in which it finds itself, and which is expressed in the domination of the right wing, that is, of capitalism. But the obstacle has still so far been seen only in particular policies and particular leaders. The key to the cage has still to be turned—the key of working-class unity, based on the

democratic co-operation of all working-class organisations, within which Communism can play its rightful part. Once this goal is recognised, not only by Communists, but equally by all non-Communists who desire the end of right-wing capitalist domination in the labour movement and the advance to socialism, the road to victory is open.

Three Stages of Battle

The battle for socialism in the labour movement, which is expressed today in the question of the Communist Party and the Labour Party, is the history of the modern political labour movement in Britain. It has gone through successive stages, already before the Communist Party existed, and before the Labour Party existed. The first stage was the battle of the early socialist pioneers, from whom the Communist Party is descended, to free the trade unions from servitude to the capitalist Liberal Party. In the face of bitter opposition from the older non-socialist leaders, this initial stage was achieved with the decision of the trade unions to form, in alliance with all the then existing socialist organisations (both Marxist and non-Marxist), a separate parliamentary party, which became the Labour Party. This was not yet a socialist working-class party; until the first world war it still followed in practice in the tail of the Liberal Party. But it represented, as Lenin pointed out in 1908, a 'first step on the part of the really proletarian organisations of England towards a conscious class policy and towards a *socialist* Labour Party'—provided the Marxist vanguard was able to fulfil its role within it 'to work hand-in hand with them . . . right in the heart of the proletarian masses'. The Marxist movement in Britain at that time, however, was insufficiently developed or politically experienced to fulfil this role. Capitalist politics dominated the Labour Party; while the representatives of Marxism, although originally participating in the foundation of the Labour Party and later re-joining, were heavily fettered by sectarian conceptions, and for the greater part of the period remained voluntarily outside.

A Birth in Two Halves

Hence the second stage of the battle, the battle for the recognition of the aim of socialism in the mass political labour movement, was only partially fulfilled, and in a confused form. When the experience of the first world war and the victory of the first socialist revolution

in 1917 brought an upsurge of working-class militancy and socialist aspirations in Britain, the new advance took place in two halves. On the one hand, it brought the formal recognition of a socialist aim by the Labour Party. On the other hand, it brought the amalgamation of the former Marxist or would-be Marxist sects to form the Communist Party, which sought for the first time to fulfil the role of a political vanguard of the working class, based on Marxist theory, acting within and in unity with the mass organisations. The combination of these two halves could have opened the way to the development of a socialist working-class movement in Britain.

Capitalism Strikes Back

It was at this point that the representatives of capitalist policy within the labour movement were quick to sense the danger and to act. By refusing the affiliation of the Communist Party, and later extending this to the exclusion of Communist delegates, and then of all Communist members, and finally of all workers sympathising or co-operating with Communists, they deliberately smashed the previous foundation basis of the Labour Party as an alliance of all working-class organisations, trade union, co-operative or socialist, irrespective of tendency and outlook, left or right, Marxist or non-Marxist. Where they had found no difficulty in accepting the affiliation of a sect preaching Marxism as a doctrine, they were not prepared to accept the affiliation of a Communist Party, which was capable of acting as a political vanguard to mobilise all the working class and socialist forces in the Labour Party, defeat capitalist policy and leadership, and thus bring about the advance of the mass political labour movement to the stage of socialist politics, the conquest of real political power (not ministerial administration of capitalism and imperialism) into the hands of the working class, and the victory of socialism.

Buckling on the Straitjacket

Hence the third stage of the battle for socialism in the working-class movement, the battle to follow up the nominal acceptance of the aim of socialism by the mass working-class organisations to a real break with the politics of capitalism and imperialism, and advance to socialist class politics, capable of leading the majority of the nation against monopoly capitalism, has still to be carried through. This is the running theme of the entire modern period since 1918, and it is inextricably bound up with the issue of the

Communist Party and the Labour Party. The exclusion of Communism was thereafter extended to all sympathising with or suspected of sympathy with Communism, and increasingly extended to the disciplining of the most diverse left tendencies, compelling them (on pain of expulsion, carried out in the case of recalcitrant elements) to fit into a straitjacket of right-wing policy. This meant that what was involved was more than a decision on the relationship of two organisations. It represented a radical change in the basis of the Labour Party, from the original class basis (in the sense of a union of all working-class organisations, even though not yet finding expression in conscious class politics) to a doctrinal basis—the doctrine of petty-bourgeois reformism, completely tied in practice to the politics of capitalism and imperialism.

Papering Over the Old Class Basis

Thus within the ancient historical shell of the primitive class basis of the Labour Party a new content was inserted. The main organisational foundation in the trade unions as the principal source of membership and finance remained, though with an increasing admixture of individual members, no longer through membership of a socialist organisation, but on the basis of acceptance of the petty-bourgeois doctrine, and thereby opening the way to the influx, alongside genuine socialists, of a considerable array of middle-class careerists and academic exponents of capitalist economics. The nominal aim of socialism remained, though with increasing vagueness and woolliness to transform it from a theory of class change to a general ethical aspiration of social benevolence. Not class politics (which were abjured), but the petty-bourgeois doctrine was made the test of orthodoxy. This basically anti-working-class doctrine was imposed as a straitjacket on the mass working-class organisations; so that, while they remained a source of membership and finance, democratic freedom of choice of representatives was removed from them.

A Governing Party of Capitalism

In this way the Labour Party was transformed from its original character of a primitive type of class party under capitalist influence to its modern character as a governing party of capitalism, replacing the old Liberal Party, and alternating with the Tory Party in operating the two party system of the modern capitalist state, combining amicably to exclude newcomers, and more and more closely approxi-

mating in policy to fulfil the requirements of big business, impose sacrifices on the working class, conduct colonial wars, etc. From this followed the history of the three Labour Governments. In the final outcome even the nominal aim of socialism has been more and more openly repudiated in favour of the so-called 'mixed economy' (in reality, monopoly capitalism with the increasingly close participation of the State as the instrument of the general interests of the monopolies).

Crisis of Policy and Leadership

This is the situation which has given rise to the present extending revolt of the working class and supporters of socialism against the present dominant policies and leadership of the Labour Party. This revolt is not new. It has developed continuously alongside the imposition of anti-working-class policy and leadership on the Labour Party. For the doctrinal basis of petty-bourgeois reformism, that is, the essentially anti-working-class basis, which is imposed on the Labour Party, is in permanent and inevitable contradiction to the organisational basis of the Labour Party in the economic mass organisations of the working class, recruited on the grounds of economic class interests and class solidarity, irrespective of political outlook. So long as this contradiction continues so long as the Labour Party is based for the majority of its membership, not on adherents of a doctrine, but on class organisations, this battle of the working class and socialism against the policies of capitalism and against the domination of the petty-bourgeois leadership supporting capitalism, is inherent in its nature. A section of the right wing has toyed with the idea of freeing the Labour Party from this permanent inner conflict by transforming its basis from the trade unions to an individual membership accepting a doctrine, as in the majority of social democratic parties. But this idea has been withdrawn, as soon as it has been bruited, not only for obvious financial reasons, but because (as the Tory Premier, Sir Winston Churchill, went out of his way to emphasise at the last Conservative Conference, when he explained why he, although opposed to any role of the trade unions in politics, favoured their participation in the Labour Party) any such separation would destroy the function of the Labour Party from the capitalist standpoint as a machine to hold the working class in chains and prevent the emergence of genuine working-class politics. Therefore the battle for the soul and future of the Labour Party, as the common organisation of the main mass organisations of the working class, continues and is likely to extend further.

Half a Century of Battle

Through all these three and a half decades since 1918, and, indeed, throughout the half century of existence of the Labour Party, this battle has continued, flaring up anew in ever renewed forms, whatever the varying role or transitions of particular leaders. Sometimes partial victories have been won at a given conference over a specific issue; particular policies have been successfully changed by the pressure of the rank and file against the platform, as over non-intervention in Spain between 1936 and 1937. The winning of the right of constituency parties to elect their own representatives to the Executive secured a measure of rank and file choice of a minority of the Executive. Individual leaders, previously dominant, have passed from the scene as with MacDonald, Snowden and Thomas, who carried through the exclusion of Communism and then passed over to the open Tory camp. The exceptionally sharp crisis and exposure resulting from this open treason resulted in a temporary period of confusion (typified in the role of Lansbury as leader), until the old policies and system of control were firmly re-established under Attlee, Morrison and Bevin as the successors of MacDonald, Snowden and Thomas. Through all these vicissitudes and ups and downs the essential domination of the right-wing machine has never in fact been weakened, whatever the changing moods of conferences. Indeed, the right-wing domination is today in many respects more reactionary, and closer to Toryism, than ever before. The left may sometimes have won a battle. The left has never as yet won a campaign or changed the essential character of the Labour Party.

The Big Question Mark

Why? On the face of it, this progress to the right, to ever closer approximation to Toryism, over half a century might seem contrary to the whole historical trend. But it is not contrary to the trend of the top leadership of Right-Wing Social Democracy during this half century. Is this continued and entrenched domination of the Right Wing, in the face of successive waves of revolt, and of the heaviest historical exposures, based on overwhelming mass support? On the contrary, even allowing for the weighted character of the voting system. On the issue of German rearmament there is no doubt that a ballot of the membership, and there is every probability that a Special Conference, would show an overwhelming majority against. But the official policy remains united with Toryism in favour. Similarly on increased rents, wage demands, the war in Kenya, or a

host of issues. Morecambe swept forward the demand for a radical revision of the programme to the left. *Challenge to Britain*, pressed through at Margate a year later in face of hundreds of hostile amendments, is the most reactionary programme yet adopted by the Labour Party; while on the foreign and empire policy statement amendments were not even allowed. Morrison was swept off the Executive by popular vote at Morecambe. Morrison was smuggled back on the Executive by the back door at Margate. The Right Wing remains so far in permanent control, whatever the moods and passions of conferences.

The Lesson for the Left

Why? The answer is inescapable. The Right Wing remains so far in permanent control, not just because of the block vote, although the block vote is part of its present machinery. For the block vote can operate the other way, as Margate began to show, provided the fight of the left is correctly conducted within the unions. The Right Wing remains so far in permanent control, because it fights as an organised force, because it is a political machine, because it holds the machinery of control; while the opposition is scattered, unorganised, without a firm common policy or leadership, based on isolated individuals or isolated constituency parties, all under continuous threat of discipline, expulsion or disaffiliation if they go too far or attempt to organise, and only beginning to reach more strength when some national unions, as a result of the left advance among their members, have begun to enter the battle.

Spontaneity and Organisation

The conclusion is manifest. To counter and defeat the Right, there must be a counterposing political machine of the left, of the fight for the working class and socialism, that is, a political party of the left, of the working class and socialism, based on the theory of socialism, on Marxism, rooted in the working class, in the factories and unions, working in closest co-operation and unity with all sections of the working class and supporters of socialism within the Labour Party, and openly proclaiming and fighting for a militant working-class and socialist policy against the capitalist and Tory policies of the Right Wing. Only on this basis, in proportion as the strength of such a political party is built up as the indispensable instrument of the working-class fight, and its close ties and co-operation strengthened with all sections in the trade unions and in the

Labour Party, can the tables be finally turned against the Right Wing, and the defeats of spontaneity give place to the victory of political organisation, leading to the advance of the mass political labour movement to the conquest of political power and the victory of socialism. Herein lies the significance of the role of the Communist Party in the present stage of development of the labour movement in Britain.

The Communist Party and the Left

‘But how can there be a political party of the working class other than the Labour Party?’ asks a bewildered Labour supporter, who may be in full sympathy with the programme put forward by the Communist Party for a united labour movement. ‘Is not the Labour Party the political party of the working class? Would it not be better if the Communists dissolved their organisation and entered individually into the Labour Party to help our fight from inside?’ The immediate practical answer to this question is obvious in present circumstances. The question is not a question of individuals. It is a question of an organised political fight for a policy. The existence of the Communist Party and of the daily organ sustained by the support of the Communist Party and the left, the *Daily Worker*, has alone made possible the public voicing and the ceaseless daily fight on a national scale for the platform and the issues for which the left are fighting in the Labour Party. Where else in the daily press can the left Labour worker or trade unionist look for the voicing and championship of his fight? Certainly not in the *Daily Herald*. And that is only one demonstration of the meaning of an organised political fight which is made possible only by the existence of the Communist Party. The advance of the left in the Labour Party during recent years is a welcome sign. But if the left has thus advanced, if issues which a few years ago the Communist Party was almost alone in voicing are today taken up by millions, this political awakening and stirring is not only due to the hard lessons of objective experience; it is also due to the ceaseless daily agitation and campaigning of the Communist Party and the *Daily Worker*. The individual left worker in the Labour Party is conducting a valiant fight, and good luck to him. But in isolation the individual left member or constituency party, confronted with the relentlessly used power of the right-wing machine, is in one of the weakest and most exposed positions in the political spectrum. An organised political fight is essential for victory. And an organised political fight is only made possible by the existence of the Communist Party.

Class and Party

That is the short-term practical answer in present conditions. But it is necessary to carry the basic question raised a little deeper. In what sense is the Labour Party to be regarded as a 'political party of the working class'? In its organisation it is based on the principal mass organisations of the working class, the trade unions. In this sense it is a party based on the working class. But the trade unions are economic class organisations. They are not political organisations. A trade union must seek to recruit all workers in its given trade or industry, irrespective of their political views. The basing of a party on the trade unions does not therefore automatically guarantee the character of its politics; that can only be decided by its programme, policy and leadership and the judgment of what class interests these represent. This, and not the composition of its membership is the decisive test of the political character of a party. In this sense the Labour Party, despite its composition fails to fulfil the role of a political party of the working class. The advance of the trade unions to participate in parliamentary political activity is a very important step forward—the historic step forward represented by the formation of the Labour Party. But this could only be the first step, not the last. 'Pure and simple' trade union consciousness, as Lenin used to insist, is still capitalist consciousness in the sense that it still expresses the class struggle only within the confines of capitalism and within an assumed permanent framework of capitalism. Socialist consciousness has to be added to this to reach full political class consciousness. This is not at the beginning the outlook of the whole working class, which contains every stage of development within its ranks, but only of the socialist class-conscious vanguard whose task is to assist the advance and political development of the whole class. That is why the political party of the working class, if it is to fulfil its function, cannot be co-terminous with the whole working class, or even with the whole organised working class, so long as capitalism exists, or even for a considerable time after. There must be a political party of the working class, that is, of the socialist class-conscious vanguard, acting within the entire body of the organised working class as well as among the unorganised workers.

The Conception of the Alliance

The significance of this elementary Marxist teaching on the relation of class and party for illuminating the problem of the Labour Party is evident. The basing of the Labour Party on the trade

unions does not automatically make it a political party of the working class. On the contrary, the basing on the outlook of 'pure and simple' trade union consciousness alone (the outlook, say, of a J. H. Thomas or a Clynes) would inevitably lead to the domination of capitalist politics and capitalist leadership, or a petty-bourgeois leadership on behalf of capitalism (a MacDonald resting on a Thomas, or an Attlee resting on a Bevin)—*unless* a political party of the working class, representing the socialist vanguard, conducts a ceaseless, relentless fight within it against the domination of capitalism and for working-class and socialist politics. This was the conception of the socialist pioneers when they founded the Labour Party as an *alliance* of socialist *organisations* and the trade unions. This is the conception which the modern right-wing leadership of the Labour Party deliberately destroyed, when they first refused the affiliation of the Communist Party, then harried the I.L.P. out of the Labour Party, then killed the Socialist League, now alternately threaten and coax the Bevan group to dissolve themselves and come inside and be gagged in the name of collective discipline, have directly changed the constitution to rule out any further affiliation of any socialist organisation, and watch with lynx eyes against the emergence of any organised militant socialist grouping within the Labour Party. They know where the danger lies for their continued domination and their subjection of the Labour Party to capitalist politics. But they have not been able to kill the Communist Party, nor its ever growing closeness, in the living daily struggle of the working class, with the militant elements in the unions and in the Labour Party. The conception of the alliance is being built anew in the new conditions.

The Communist Party Lives and Fights

History has cleared off the stage all the sects and the older, weaker organisations. The remnants of the I.L.P. have disappeared into a handful of local debating societies. The Socialist League has vanished. The S.P.G.B. is engaged in an earth-shaking discussion on the thesis that advocacy of 'pure socialism' does not involve taking sides in the class struggle. The Fabian Society anxiously protects its affiliation by announcing that it has no share in making policy. Today a stage has been reached when the Communist Party is the only political party fighting for the aims of the working class and of socialism, for the national independence of Britain and of the colonial peoples, for all the present and future

interests of the working people, for the living needs of the people against the remorseless economic offensive of the monopolists and their Tory Government and their rearmament and cold war programme, for peace and the co-operation of nations, for the winning of the whole labour movement to the glorious aims of socialism and the fulfilment of all the dreams of human brotherhood towards which the socialist pioneers strove. Thirty-four years of tireless struggle and unrecorded devotion without equal on the part of its membership have dug its roots deep in the heart of the working class, so that none can destroy it. There remains still in the forefront of the stage the Tory Party, the party of the bankrupt and doomed monopoly capitalists. There remain the dwindling remnants of the once mighty Liberal Party. There remains the increasingly discredited right-wing leadership still in control of the Labour Party and of the Trades Union Congress, passing from crisis to crisis of divisions which have reached even to their upper ranks, and confronted with the extending revolt of their own membership. And in the face of these representatives of the dying social order there lives and fights the Communist Party, the representative of all that is advancing and fighting within the working class and among the whole people for the future of Britain. Who that understands the era in which we are living can doubt which party represents the future, or which party will in the final outcome prove to be the party of victory?

Unity

To build and strengthen the alliance in action is now the supreme task. The Communist Party Congress will direct all its efforts to building and strengthening the alliance and unity in action of the Communist Party and of all sections within the trade unions, co-operatives and Labour Party which are striving for the defeat of Toryism and its allies in the labour movement, and for the replacement of the existing reactionary capitalist and war policies by militant progressive policies. The strengthening of the Communist Party and the advance of the militant fight in industry, within the trade unions and in the Labour Party are all indispensable parts of this common advance. The Communist Party Congress will devote its efforts to further the aim of unity in action of all sections of the working class and its allies around an elementary common programme corresponding to the needs of the people, in order to defeat the present offensive of the employers and the Tory Government, to speed the ending of the Tory Government of war and economic

misery, and to return in its place a Government based on the labour movement and committed to such a common programme, with the continuing strength and activity of the mass movement to ensure its fulfilment. The gravity of the present situation, of the reckless drive to war and of the menacing economic prospect, makes imperative such a common united programme and broadest mobilisation of the people as the essential next step forward. In proportion as the strength and unity of the working people is built up in the fight, the path opens out, not only to combat and defeat the present dangers, but to advance to the further aims for the final defeat of monopoly capitalism and the victory of socialism. The battle in front will still be arduous, and will still bring its many ordeals. But the future belongs to the working class, to socialism; and the Communist Party fights for that future.

March 16, 1954.

R.P.D.

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THE POLITICAL SCENE

JOHN GOLLAN

THE political situation in Britain is marked by a sharp contradiction. On the face of it there is widespread political apathy. The by-elections show no enthusiasm and low polls. Labour is making no progress electorally. Yet at the same time there is a rising mass movement against the Tories and a growing revolt within the movement against the Right-wing leadership and policy which received its biggest expression yet in the record vote against German rearmament in the Parliamentary Labour Party. To resolve this contradiction is a vital need.

The situation facing the country is serious. It was a victory that the Foreign Ministers met at Berlin. It is an important gain that the conference on Korea and Indo-China will take place at Geneva with People's China occupying her rightful place at the conference table. But no real negotiation took place at Berlin due to Western insistence on arming Adenauer. Yet the alternatives advanced by Molotov for a genuine European Security system are daily gaining ground. A great increase in public pressure by the peace 'forces' can enforce real negotiations at Geneva. How urgent this is is shown by government policy since Berlin. The 'Defence' Estimates show preparation for war on an ever-mounting scale with the details of the future atomic warfare (an atomic holocaust first, then 'broken-backed' warfare) sketched in detail all the more frightful because of its cold official language. And the Ministry of Supply is developing germ warfare as a matter of routine. This is the grim logic of support of the American alliance. Ruthless suppression in Kenya proceeds apace with the white settlers elevated into a 'war-cabinet' and repeated court martials of army officers revealing sadistic terror without parallel. British Honduras is threatened with the fate of British Guiana.

Economically the country is dominated by the fear of the consequences for Britain of a U.S. slump, a prospect for which the Government holds out no solution. It is ironical that the only radical new trade prospects are Russian orders, orders hamstrung by the U.S. trade bans. Socially the boasts of the Welfare State have turned into the talk of the crisis in the Welfare State. Remorselessly the Government and the employers pursue their joint policy of rising prices, increased rents and resistance to wage increases.

Here is a situation which should be one of the greatest importance for the British Labour movement. Never were the Tories more vulnerable. Never was there greater need for the working-class movement to emerge as the leading force of the nation. Britain, the Labour movement urgently requires a new challenging policy which could rally the overwhelming majority of the nation and isolate the Tories.

But what is happening? Every militant worker in the Labour movement needs to take the most serious warning from the five recent by-elections. In the midst of the most critical political and menacing economic situation since 1945, the majority of electors did not bother to vote. The highest poll was 59 per cent. (Harwich) and the lowest 45 per cent. (Bournemouth and Ilford). But the most serious and alarming feature of all for the Labour movement is the fact that within this smaller vote there was a rise in the proportion of Tory votes cast and a corresponding fall in the proportion of total Labour votes. In Ilford North the Tory proportion of the total vote went up by 4.3 per cent., Liberal by 1.4 per cent., but Labour's proportion went down 5.7 per cent. At Harwich the Tory proportion went up .2 per cent., Hull-Haltemprice 3.7 per cent., Bournemouth West 4.2 per cent., and Arundel 1.1 per cent. Labour's proportion in these places fell by a corresponding amount. These figures are a condemnation of the policy of the Right-wing Labour leaders. That the Government is arousing no enthusiasm among its own supporters is clear. But what is ominous is the complete failure of official Labour policy to rally the electorate against the disastrous Tory record. Indeed, the verdict of the electorate is that there is no alternative policy to vote for, they see no real difference in policy between the leaders of the two main parties.

Yet while this is the position in the electoral field the mass opposition against the Tories is rising. Despite the debate on German rearmament in Parliament a Gallup Poll immediately afterwards showed a majority in Britain against it, with the opposition equally spread among the supporters of all parties. The great wage movement of the electricians, the engineers, the railwaymen, and others, using or threatening to use strike action has scored important successes and cut through the paralysis of 20 years of class collaboration. It has frightened the Government, the employers and the Right-wing leaders alike. The ever increasing women's movement on prices, wages, equal pay and education is a factor of growing importance. The opposition to the Tory Rent Bill is gathering

weight. East-West trade has become a central political issue. The understanding of the reciprocal relationship of the colonial struggle for liberation with the struggle at home is growing.

What is the lesson of all this? The country and the Labour movement wants to fight, the people want a new militant challenging programme. But not only is no lead coming from the Labour leaders, on the main issues their policy is indistinguishable from that of the Tories. They fear the rising mass movement, nothing is further from their minds than challenging and defeating the Tories.

It is clear that German rearmament can never be pushed through if a united Labour movement rallies the country in opposition. The shameful decision of Attlee and Morrison to line up behind Churchill on this issue has brought the revolt in the movement to a new pitch. *The Times* deludes itself when it writes that Britain has a national policy on this issue. The almost equal division in the Parliamentary Party with the Right wing bringing in the peers to avert defeat, the fact that important trade unionists in the Labour Party Executive cast their vote against shows the depth of feeling and the possibilities. These possibilities are now gathering expression around the demand for a special Labour Party conference on the issue. But as far as the Right wing is concerned Labour and Tory policy on this issue are one. It was because of this revolt that the Right wing had to make an appearance of token opposition to the arms programme and the two-years national service. But it will remain a token opposition if the leaders have their way.

On the Rent Bill their 'opposition' causes little Tory concern for they have conceded the central point, namely, increased rents. On the great industrial movement they had no word of encouragement or support. The chairman of the Labour Party had a great opportunity when he made his broadcast; instead he condemned the movement with his talk of 'our duties to the community', 'a duty not to start an endless chain between wages and prices by pressing claims the nation can't afford.' They are so eaten up with their cold war policy that they are silent on East-West trade while the more astute Churchill talks of approaching the Americans about easing restrictions. And the more they support the Tories the more Churchill and Lyttelton rub their noses in the dirt. Never has any Government shown more contempt for an official 'opposition'. How can there be any change in the by-election position on the basis of a policy such as this?

What the Tories and the employers do fear, however, is the developing opposition to the official Right-wing policy within the movement, the rising industrial struggles and the mass movement throughout the country. Their alarm is shared to the full by the Right-wing leaders. Uniting all these forces and separate actions into a common movement would not only be reflected in a reversal of the present by-election trends, it would also bring about a position where the continuation of Tory rule would be impossible and Tory defeat certain. The Right wing is making every effort to disrupt the struggle. The Margate Labour Party conference was a significant stage in the emergence of the new challenging force and alternative programme in the movement. It carried forward the opposition shown to Right-wing policy at the T.U.C. and showed the developing unity of the Left-wing constituency parties with the growing sections of progressive trade unionists. The revolt on German rearmament shows how this challenging force is developing and expanding. There can be little doubt that if the widespread demand for an Emergency Labour Party conference were to triumph a majority against German rearmament could be won. And this would be a tremendous step forward in transforming the entire political situation.

Never was the Government so worried about the industrial situation, for here the grip of the Right-wing leadership and tactics is visibly weakening. This explains the consistent Government campaign initiated and waged by Sir Godfrey Ince for settlement of all disputes by industrial arbitration instead of by struggle. His formula is 'finality in all negotiating machinery by way of agreed provision by reference to arbitration if there is failure to settle a dispute by joint negotiation.' This is the modern equivalent of the abolition of the right to strike. And the majority of the General Council of the T.U.C. is displaying a shameful alacrity in jumping in to discuss this proposition. They look to such means, in conjunction with the employers, to damn the flood of struggle opened up by the electricians, railwaymen and engineers and at the same time to maintain their paralysing grip. The answer here is obvious, to prosecute the wages struggle with every means open to trade union power, to use trade unionism as its founders intended and finish with class collaboration once and for all.

It is in this rapidly developing situation that the Communist Party holds its 23rd National Congress, a congress which will advance a programme and policy which can resolve the contradiction in the

present political situation. The Congress has been preceded by an Open Letter to all members of the Labour Party, trade unions and the Co-operative movement on German rearmament. The keynote of that letter is the reminder to British Labour of its 'serious responsibility to defeat the Tory Government's war policy and enforce an alternative policy for peace, national independence and social advance'. It calls for a great united campaign by all men and women, by workers in the factories, and by the trade unions, Labour parties and Co-operative organisations to secure a lasting peace. It asks that this campaign in particular be directed to every Labour M.P. and the National Executive of the Labour Party.

At the same time the Party has taken the decision to contest the Motherwell by-election because of the need to raise the fight against German rearmament and for peace to still greater heights. 'If the next General Election is to be won,' said Harry Pollitt announcing this decision, 'the present drift to the Tories must be changed. Fundamentally, the cause of the apathy is the absence of the fight by the Labour Party in Parliament and the absence of any socialist policy.' The Communist Party fights to end this position once and for all. From the 23rd National Congress will come a real policy and fighting lead for the entire British Labour movement.

THE AMERICAN SCENE

WAR DRIVE . . . SLUMP . . . McCARTHYISM.

These three problems confront organised Labour in the United States.

How is the American working class facing up to them?

Why does Eisenhower adopt Keynesism?

What are the prospects of *a united fight* against Eisenhower-McCarthy-Dulles?

These are questions of great interest to the British Labour movement, who are told nothing of progressive America today. We are therefore proud to announce that our May Day number will contain an article especially written for *Labour Monthly* readers, entitled '*Problems of Organised Labour in U.S.A.*', by William Z. Foster, veteran trade union leader who in 1919 organised and led in strike struggle the previously 'unorganised' U.S. steel workers. Foster is the Chairman of the Communist Party of the U.S.A.: and is the author of *Outline Political History of the Americas*; and many other books. William Gallacher, reviewing his last in *Labour Monthly*, December, 1952, called it a 'great book'. His present article continues our series opened in January by Pietro Nenni, leader of the Italian Socialist Party, and continued in February by Jacques Duclos, Secretary of the French Communist Party.

MAKING PEACE

IVOR MONTAGU

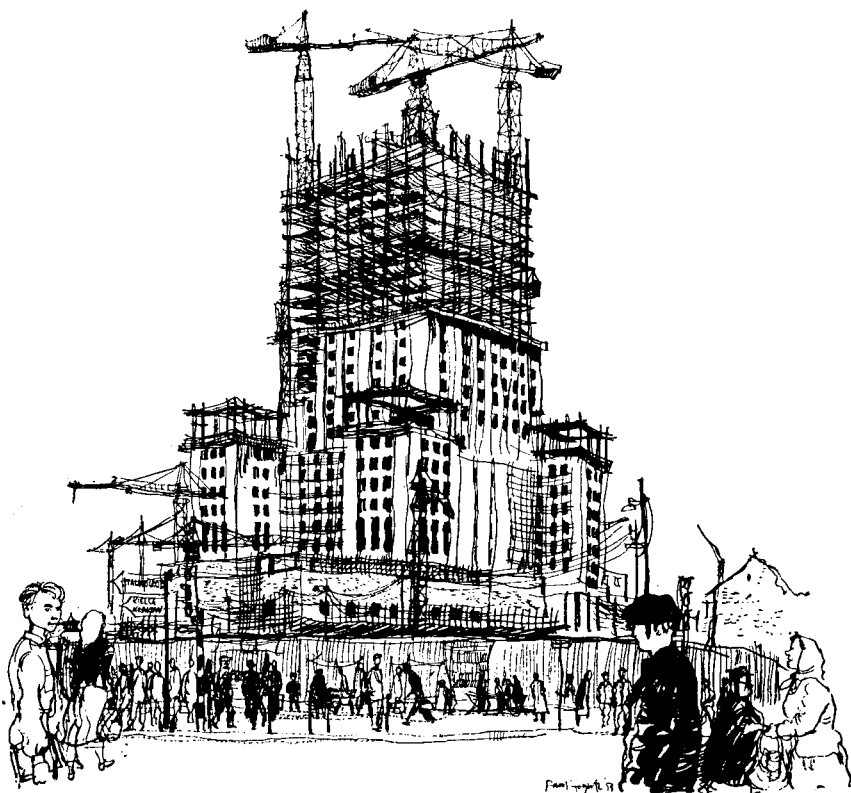
THE chiefest obstacle to making peace is not Dulles, Adenauer or even Sir John Slessor. Surely the dullest can see that the chiefest obstruction to winning peace now is our own disunity, the divisions among those who do not want war.

The motto for the peace movement, or at least the great exemplar, lies in Dr. Johnson's saying after his night at the inn: 'If the fleas had been unanimous they'd have had me out of bed'. The significant thing about us fleas nowadays is that we are growing to be more and more of one mind, though we still keep jerking out of step and in different directions, while too many of us are still torpid and not even biting.

The first phase of the battle for peace is won. But the fruits of victory will never be enjoyed unless we get going on the second. When one looks back upon the arduous struggles of the movement during the last six years, one can only be amazed, and humble, at the extent to which clarity has come, and general agreement grown up, on the issues of peace and war. In 1948, the time of Wroclaw, those who spoke of a war danger were held to be alarmists, and critics of the dangers inherent in American policy dismissed as slanderers. In 1951, the Soviet Union, if not accounted a direct enemy, was at least accepted as impossible, a Third World War as inevitable and the idea of peaceful co-existence as a Communist pipe-dream. Today the policies of the peace movement are become the aspirations of all reasonable men, and are even advocated out loud in the most unlikely quarters. Millionaires flock to Moscow to warble trade tunes that not so long ago were the off-key whisperings of 'fellow-travellers'. Soviet dancers and puppets delight English T.V., while modern art (Indian version) and the Comédie Française whet Muscovite appetites. The need for negotiations, the wickedness of prolonging or resuming fighting, the peril and wastefulness of stockpiling arms, the tiresomeness of the cold war—these are common ground for all sorts and conditions and countries, and make (largely as yet inarticulate) headway even in U.S.A. Not even the most subtle South Sea Bubble technique of Lyttelton ('crimes of Mau Mau so horrible they must be relegated to an unprinted appendix so that no-one shall know what they are') contrives to avert

Drawings of Poland - - - *by*

PAUL HOGARTH spent two months in Poland and Czechoslovakia during the summer and autumn of 1953. The first fruits of the work he did there—a series of 70 drawings and lithographs of the new life of the Polish people—can be seen in London at the Artists' International Association Gallery, 15, Lisle Street, W.C. 2 from April 14 till May 5. The exhibition will afterwards be shown in Glasgow, Manchester, Cambridge and other centres. The Polish people at peace, absorbed in the building of Socialism, is the theme of this new collection of Hogarth's drawings which provide at the same time, a dramatic and edifying contrast to his portrayal of the oppressed people of Greece.



Building the Joseph Stalin Palace of Culture and Science, Warsaw

Paul Hogarth



Silesian Miner in Traditional Uniform

deepening disquiet from his white barbarian genocides. United Nations votes show already an overwhelming majority of populations, and a growing minority of governments, turn from the sanctimonious pretensions of the civilised who claim the right to tutelage of other peoples in the interest of democracy (*à la* British Guiana), freedom (*à la* McCarthy), respect for the individual (*à la* napalm and atom bomb). Indeed the extraordinary and particular characteristic of the current stage of the peace struggle is the isolation of those who are preparing war.

Who wants to resume the war in Korea? Nobody. Certainly none of the prospective soldiers. Syngman Rhee says he does, but even he knows it would be his doom. Who wants to go on with the war in Vietnam? Certainly nobody in Vietnam. The generals find it hard enough to find anyone there willing to pretend to, even for the reward of a portfolio. Anybody in France? Diogenes with a searchlight would have to go as far as Washington before he could find somebody.

Who wants the rearmament of Germany? Not the German people. Eden, Dulles, Bidault let out screams of horror, and try to fill the conference chamber with peals of hollow frightened laughter and shouts of 'undemocratic' when Molotov suggests consulting them. A gathering of 'Socialists' of the Attlee, Spaak, Morgan Phillips brand meets in conclave on the subject and returns the magnificent verdict—9-1 in favour of the rearmament of Germany. What a victory! Only, the 1 happens to be Germany. And the neighbours? Poland, Czechoslovakia, do they want it? Do the Danes want it, or the Austrians? Does anybody suppose the Dutch or Belgians really want it, the Norwegians and Italians? The French want it so much that Washington's satraps have to ban demonstrations against it headed by two prime ministers. As for the British—we know just how much we're longing for it, how angry and aghast the Labour lads are at Morrison's manoeuvres, how embarrassed their Conservative acquaintances at Churchill's espousal. It is hardly possible to think of anything so universally unpopular in Europe for decades, or that if dropped with a thud would rouse a sigh of relief more heartfelt and more general.

Who wants to preserve the weapons of mass destruction? There was a time, maybe, when the Bolshy bogey was at its bulkiest, that the fantasy that Americans alone possessed it, and were our friends, and could blow to bits any naughty men who menaced us, may have

made others beside Churchill sleep easier o' nights. Now the obscene and vicious gloatings of atom generals—U.S. or British—over their boasted 'mighty power' to exterminate myriads of human families whenever they so choose (in defence of the free world, of course) provokes less reassurance among those they claim to be defending (who know whoever survives retaliation they themselves would not) than an inward freeze of horror that monsters of such amoralties should degrade their national uniform, mock church parade, corrupt the conscript children under their command, by such fiendish imaginings.

But the corresponding and concurrent characteristic of the present time is that, notwithstanding this isolation, the war programme goes steadily ahead and ahead nevertheless.

Not a critic, not a correspondent, not a commentator, writing of Vietnamese affairs, but now admits that, granted peace, granted a consultation with the people, the *true* desires of the people would turn all to Ho Chi Minh. Yet the war proceeds nevertheless. And villainous and conscienceless scribes and politicians in abundance explain that (in the interest of democracy and freedom of course) the success of the Geneva Conference 'depends' on the willingness of the Chinese to 'abandon Ho Chi Minh'!

Not a strategist, not a statesman, not a sycophant can explain in what way, and against what, Europe will be more secure when the Nazi airmen who bombed Coventry have their arms again, the Nazi Generals who over-ran Europe, shot hostages and slaughtered prisoners have armies again, the Krupp and I. G. Farben factories are making guns and extermination-chamber gas again, the war criminals are exhumed for Valhalla, and the horde of Nazi officials in Adenauer's administration are in a position to do more than sigh publicly for their 'lost territories'. Yet these are the indissoluble partners who are being forced on us apace. And no-one is supposed even to consider, or discuss, practical examination of the Soviet alternative suggestion of an all-European concert.

No scientist, no military commander, not Slessor, not Dean, not Churchill, not Eisenhower—not even Mr. Attlee to whom the signatories of the Stockholm Appeal appeared as dupes or traitors or Mr. Dimbleby with his absurd television fireworks—can seriously pretend that this island and its people (outside a handful in ray-conditioned Whitehall cellars) could possibly survive atomic war. Yet they all rush us cheerfully ahead to a broken-backed doom.

None of this is necessary. None of this need be. We have the power to stop it—from now on. This human power, this power of mankind's united will, has this year manifested itself dramatically—recently enough, surely, not to be forgotten. We, the human race, stopped the fighting in Korea. We, through the strength of our opinion, forced the resumption of negotiations, over the Himalayan obstruction of the most reluctant statesmen. We can end the remaining fighting in the world. We can avoid German rearmament. We can remove the atom menace. At a price. The price of co-operation among all those that desire this.

When G. D. H. Cole wrote in the *New Statesman* his devastating onslaught on the policy of German rearmament and called for all those against it to work actively with all peace organisations not associated with Communists, what did he mean? His words meant: 'a terrible danger threatens the world that will consume all humanity. We must do our utmost to avert this danger, but utmost does not include co-operation or even discussion to seek common ground with more than half the human race. If we cannot do the job without this half, let mankind perish'. No doubt this is not what he meant to mean. It is the infallible consequence of what he said.

I have never known a period, either before the war or after, when there was such complete agreement about what most needs to be done in relation to war and peace among all those actively concerned with the problem, in U.S.S.R. and in Britain, in China and Brazil, in France, Sweden and India—maybe, if only we could talk to them, in U.S.A. also—among pacifists and Communists, Congressists and Quakers, Labourites and Radicals and Conservatives and Christian Democrats. Can we now not see the party bans as a segregation device to preserve the policies of cliques that have long ceased to be the policies of majorities? Can we not make an effort to overcome the stronger bans, not formal but psychological, that hinder us from learning the viewpoints one of another, to make the necessary modifications in our own?

The statesmen have talked and not agreed. The people want them to agree. Surely it is the time for the leaders of opinion, the publicists and writers, the representatives of different social institutions and currents of thought, political and religious, to meet, exercise their boasted independence of thought, carry out the responsibilities on which they rightly pride themselves, to explore, discuss, seek to understand, seek to influence, seek in common to guide the way to compromise. Have they no rôle?

Co-operation, common or even parallel action—coming to this cannot be easy. The legacies of past mistrust cannot be lightly wished away. But if it is *ever* to be achieved, the beginning must be made. *The present phase of the struggle for peace, is a struggle for meeting, discussion, understanding, across frontiers not merely geographical but of the spirit.*

This is essential preliminary to the mutual confidence which alone can bring the common action capable of successfully organising man's will. We must learn, and then show the peace-makers how, to make peace. Modest regarding our own ideas, patient and open-eyed for the ideas of others. The task of mutual understanding lies today before all of us working for peace, whatever our viewpoint or organisation. If we do not succeed, the fault will lie not with those preparing war, for we are stronger, but with ourselves.

FROM THE *LABOUR MONTHLY* OF 25 YEARS AGO

EINSTEIN'S ANNIVERSARY

On March 14, Albert Einstein, the greatest scientist of our times, celebrated his fiftieth birthday. There is no doubt that on this occasion official bourgeois science will claim the great thinker as one of their own. The proletariat, however, knows that Einstein has never belonged to those reactionary prophets of German science who, whatever they may be able to achieve in their specialised sphere, in the great questions confronting humanity are only able to enunciate the narrowest Chauvinism and class ignorance. With that galaxy of professors who were rightly dubbed 'the spiritual bodyguard of the Hohenzollerns', Professor Einstein has nothing whatever to do.

The workers know that always, when it has been necessary to make a stand against the white terror, against imperialist oppression, or against cultural reaction, Einstein has numbered among those few intellectuals who have given their support to the cause of the oppressed. Although he has not adopted a positive attitude towards revolutionary Marxism, towards the Communist movement, nevertheless he has followed with the greatest sympathy the work of socialist construction in the Soviet Union, and he entered the ranks of the International League against Imperialism (of which he was one of the Presidents) along with the representatives of the revolutionary proletariat for the liberation of the colonial peoples.

From *Einstein and Dialectical Materialism*,
by Joseph Winternitz, April, 1929.

EMPIRE AND THE PEOPLES

BEN BRADLEY

APRIL 21 will mark the opening in London of a conference of Communist and Workers' Parties from countries within the sphere of British Imperialism. This conference will be taking place at an extremely opportune moment. Never before has the liberation struggle of all the peoples subject to British domination or exploitation risen to such heights all over the world. Never before has there been such a great awakening and such grave concern throughout wide sections of the labour movement and democratic opinion in Britain, to express solidarity with the colonial peoples against the barbarous methods being used to hold them down. Never before was the need for the closer alliance between the British working class and colonial and dependent peoples who are struggling for freedom been so important as it is today.

Why does the colonial question stand in the forefront today? Ever since Churchill declared during the war that he had not taken office 'to preside over the dissolution of the British Empire', every device has been tried to hold on to it and at the same time to intensify the exploitation of empire resources and of the peoples. Originating in the City, the seat of the great monopolies, this process has gone on, no matter whether it was a Labour or a Conservative Government installed at Westminster. But the contrary process, which Canute-Churchill forbade to advance, has set in more strongly: and in these last few years the British Empire has been severely weakened. Under all the polite phraseology of diplomatic exchanges a giant struggle is being waged with the United States of America for markets and sources of raw materials. Therefore the main efforts of two successive governments have been to meet the needs of British imperialist finance by a greater tribute from colonial and semi-colonial territories; to prevent American financial penetration and capture of markets in British colonial possessions: and to halt the advance of colonial liberation movements either by specious constitutional reforms or by direct military suppression.

Britain has vastly increased her tribute from the colonial and semi-colonial countries during these recent years. The most striking example of this increased exploitation is shown by the enormous

growth of sterling balances between 1949 and 1952, as given in the *Memorandum on Sterling Assets of the British Colonies, 1953*:

					£ Million
1949 (Dec. 31)	...	...	...	...	670
1950	...	...	...	...	852
1951	...	...	...	...	1,090
1952	...	...	...	...	1,222

Of the balance for 1952 the African colonies contributed more than half the sum of £621,000,000. In three years the colonial sterling balances have nearly doubled—these balances in fact represent forced loans used by Britain and withheld from the colonial peoples. These £1,222 million could be used for capital investment and industrial development for improving the system of education and social services for their own benefit by the peoples of the countries from which it is withheld. As against this the British Government boast of their generosity in allocating £134 million from Colonial Development and Welfare Funds over a period of ten years! At this rate of less than £13½ millions per annum it would take the British Government a hundred years before they repaid that which has been drawn from the colonial peoples.

At the same time American penetration within the British Empire has rapidly increased. The United States has already secured control over Canada, which is the major industrial power among the British Dominions. U.S. capital in Canada totalled \$8,000 millions by the end of 1952, or four and a half times British investments. Canada is a part of the 'dollar area' and lies outside the sterling area; its prosperity is completely dependent on U.S. business conditions, as was shown towards the end of 1953 when the warnings of an economic recession were reflected there. In other parts of the Empire, American capital direct investments in British colonies, Australia and South Africa had increased from \$257 millions to \$467 millions between 1943 and 1950. In addition the United States has increasingly penetrated the traditional markets of British imperialism within the Empire, and taken an increasing share of its raw materials and resources, while, of course, Britain pockets most, if not all, of the dollars. India, Pakistan and Ceylon, under cover of the Colombo Plan and World Bank loans, will make possible the major share of orders for hydro-electric generating plant, irrigation pumps and other development goods to go to United States manufacturers. There are today many more United States

technicians in India, Pakistan and Ceylon than British technicians. Many industrial concerns in Britain are complaining that the United States gets preferential treatment. The World Bank (U.S.) recently sent representatives to India to explore the possibilities of establishing a privately owned and managed industrial and financial corporation. As a consequence of discussions with industrialists from Bombay, Calcutta, Madras and Delhi, a steering committee was set up under the Chairmanship of Sir Ramaswami Mudaliar. The total resources to be applied was 500 million rupees (for rupees read dollars). In many other parts of the colonial and semi-colonial territories, the West Indies and the Middle East countries, Anglo-U.S. rivalry sharpens. A serious struggle is being conducted for the control of the Empire's financial and trade policies. The United States is out to break down any controls by Britain in the sterling area, and to make the pound freely convertible, thus removing all restrictions and tariff barriers for themselves to become the completely dominant imperialist power.

The post-war period has been marked by a tremendous upsurge of the liberation movement throughout the colonial world. The colonial peoples were greatly moved by the victory and liberation of the people of China from imperialism and the establishment of a People's Government there. The striking growth and development of the working-class movement in India, led by the Communist Party, is indicated by the sweeping success at the General Election, and later confirmed at recent by-elections and at the recent Travancore-Cochin election. The Communist Party of India is today the main opposition party in that country, and is mobilising the masses of India's people in the fight for a United Democratic People's Government, and for the complete freedom for India from any outside domination.

The epic struggle for independence of the Malayan people for over five years has been most costly to the British Governments (Labour and Tory) in money and lives. The barbarous methods used to suppress this freedom struggle will go down in history as the most brutal of colonial wars. Many thousands of British and Malayan lives have already been sacrificed. Indiscriminate bombing of defenceless people has been carried out, whole villages have been bulldozed out of existence, collective fines imposed at the same time as the widespread destruction of cultivated areas. Since the proclamation of the emergency in June, 1948, 600,000 persons have

been detained and over 20,000 forcibly deported. Despite this, the people of Malaya are more united and determined to secure their freedom than ever before.

The people of Kenya began to move into action shortly after the war. The port of Mombasa was paralysed by a General Strike early in January, 1947, led by the African Workers Union. Workers demonstrating were shot down and the strike leader, Chege Kibachia, was tried and exiled. At about this time the Kenya African Union held a mass meeting at Nairobi, addressed by Jomo Kenyatta and W. W. Awori. At this meeting demands were put forward for freedom of trade union organisation, equal pay for equal work and education facilities for all races. The situation has moved rapidly since then. Under pressure of the white settlers' hysterical demands for extreme measures to stop the advance to democratic freedom, the Government introduced a State of Emergency on October 20, 1952, and developed violence against the Kenya Africans on a wide scale.

Since then there have been mass arrests of men, women and children, concentration camps established, public gallows set up, communal punishments, seizing of stocks, destruction of villages, closing down of schools, banning of freedom of speech, movement, press and meetings. In addition to military measures, the Government has resorted to mass bombing of defenceless people. At the end of 1953 the Government reported that 3,399 Kenya Africans were known to have been killed and 165,462 arrested. All decent people have been shocked by the evidence of extreme brutality practised by the police and military, as exposed by the trial of Captain Griffiths. A recent Parliamentary Report indicated that there had been 130 prosecutions for brutality among the Police Force—73 convictions and 40 cases pending. Mr. Lyttelton would not take the opportunity recently made by the surrender of 'General China' to order a cease-fire and thereby create conditions for speedy negotiations and peace. Instead he granted the white settlers' demand for a War Council. Adding insult to injury, Mr. Lyttelton put forward phoney promises of 'partnership' at the end of the 'emergency': on the proffered new Council of Ministers with 16 members only one was to be an African (non-elected). Africans in Kenya are 96 per cent. of the population.

In all African territories under British rule the liberation movement for freedom and democratic rights is moving forward. In West Africa (Gold Coast, Nigeria, Sierra Leone and Gambia) the

growth and formation of the working-class movement is taking place. In the recent period the mass feeling has given birth to anti-imperialism and found expression in the demand for 'Self Government in 1956'. In Uganda, because of the growing demand for self-government expressed in the Buganda area, the British Government exiled the Kabaka or traditional ruler. Strong opposition is expressed by the African peoples in the territories of North and South Rhodesia and Nyasaland against Federation because they fear white domination. In South Africa the African and Asian population unite against the Malan Government's policy of white dictatorship. While it is true that even before the war there were small or elementary demands for democratic rights and freedom in various parts of Africa, the picture today is one of gathering strength and determination on the part of the people of Africa to be freed from foreign imperialist domination.

The West Indies (Jamaica, Trinidad, British Guiana, British Honduras and Barbados) with three and a quarter million people existing under extreme exploitation, have had a long struggle to improve their economic conditions and to obtain self-government. In British Guiana the people, in a democratic way, using the ballot box, gave an overwhelming majority to the People's Progressive Party. As soon as the people's elected representatives began to legislate in the interests of the people and not of the capitalists, armed forces were sent and the constitution suspended in October, 1953. The next flashpoint is British Honduras.

Similar struggles are being conducted in all colonies and semi-colonies under British imperialism.

It is with this background that the conference will devote itself to an exchange of views and experiences. We in Britain have a special responsibility. The continuance of British imperialist domination over colonial countries is not in the interests of the British people. We must, in all sincerity, register our abhorrence of the brutality and the atrocities committed in our name in Malaya, Kenya and elsewhere.

Already it is shown that in an endeavour to hold in subjection countries like Kenya and Malaya, the British people are forced to carry heavy burdens, covering enormous military expenditure. The burden of paying for this is passed on to the workers in the form of higher taxation, higher costs for essentials and lower standards of living. The methods of increased exploitation that are being devised, under the Colombo and other plans, for the colonial countries,

and the wealth that is extracted through sterling balances held in London must mean further impoverishment of the colonial peoples. The continued retention of colonial countries, either by force or by doubtful constitutional reforms, leaving imperialism still in control, is not in the interests of the British people. The impoverishment of millions of colonial people reflects itself upon the conditions of the people here in Britain.

It is clear from the points already made that the people of Britain and the colonial peoples, have a common interest and common fight. It is *the same people* who dominate the great monopolist enterprises in Britain in control of our shipbuilding, engineering and manufacturing concerns, who are also concerned about the retention of the colonies for cheap raw materials, huge profits and markets. It is *these same people* who, while impoverishing the peoples of the colonial countries, refuse wage increases to meet increased cost of living to engineers, shipbuilders, electricians and other workers in this country.

We have to work for the understanding that there are clearly common aims and interests between the British and colonial peoples. The British people are today faced with the position that the same monopoly capitalists have already betrayed Britain's independence, that we have today to free ourselves from United States domination. The struggle of the British people for national independence is closely linked with the present struggle taking place in all colonies and semi-colonies under British imperialist rule. The conference can further strengthen the alliance between the British people and the peoples of the colonial and semi-colonial countries in the common fight to achieve national independence.

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ATOMIC GUNS— OR ATOMIC BUTTER?

Commander EDGAR P. YOUNG, R.N., Retired

EVIDENCE during the first world war showed the dangerous vulnerability of our country to attack by submarine. During the years which followed, our Government, acting presumably on Admiralty advice, tried repeatedly, though unsuccessfully, at the League of Nations, to secure international agreement for the banning of the submarine. If, during those years, some British Admiral, and more especially if a British Admiral who had recently been Chief of the Naval Staff, had broadcast his opinion that the best way in which to preserve peace was for us to build up a vast submarine fleet and to tell Germany that its full force would be brought to bear on her in the event of her aggression, he would have been publicly disowned by the Admiralty, and dubbed an idiot by the general public. The Royal Navy does not breed that kind of idiot, however, or if it does, it takes good care not to promote them: the distinction of doing this has been left to the Royal Air Force, which has promoted to the rank of Marshal of the Royal Air Force and employed as its Chief of Staff a man called Sir John Slessor, whose recent broadcasts on the B.B.C. Third Programme on the subject of what he calls 'The Revolution in Strategy' have been the subject of much publicity, but of all too little controversy.

This distinguished Air Officer has declared that 'the era of total war is over—as long as we do not take leave of our senses and agree to atomic disarmament,' and, as a corollary to this, that the best way to prevent a third world war is for the United States and Britain to maintain 'as the first charge on our military resources' the largest possible stockpile of atomic (and hydrogen) bombs and the strongest possible 'Air Striking Force' of long-range heavy bombers, and to make public the fact that we would bring these to bear *unrestrictedly* against any aggressor. As 'the aggressor' whom it is intended 'to deter' by this threat is very clearly indicated as being the Soviet Union, this is certainly 'a revolution' in strategy, for according to P. M. S. Blackett, F.R.S., writing in February, the odds would be about ten to one against the United States, if it came to a contest of the character envisaged by Sir John Slessor, while against Britain they would be infinite (TV Press Conference, November 19, 1953). Arguments in support of this estimate are to be found, for example,

in my article in the *Labour Monthly* of June, 1952, and in a series of articles by the late Mr. Chester Wilmot in the *Observer* last October. Yet this absurd 'revolutionary' thesis has passed unchallenged by our Government and by its Service Ministries: and, worse, formally embodied in the *Statement on Defence, 1954*!

The military danger resulting from this misappreciation of the situation is more apparent than real, for it is quite certain that the Soviet Union would never be guilty of aggression; though there is, of course, the risk (much increased if the West Germany of Dr. Adenauer is allowed to re-arm) that the U.S. advocates of aggressive war against the Soviet Union and the rest of the world which has liberated, or is liberating, itself from capitalism may repeat the deception which they perpetrated in Korea. What is very real, on the other hand, and very immediate, is the economic danger which is intrinsic in the policy involved.

This economic danger is particularly serious for Britain because the early development of power from atomic energy is absolutely essential, in more ways than one, for her economic survival. It is a well-known fact that coal-output in this country is far from adequate to meet the energetic demands of our industry, and that those demands are growing, and will continue to grow, at a rate far exceeding that at which the coal-output can possibly be increased. The main reason why the productivity of U.S. industry is greater than that of our own is that the U.S. worker has about three times as much mechanical energy at his disposal as his British counterpart, and until this disparity is rectified, this country cannot hope to pay its way—at least not without very heavy cuts in the living standards of the British worker. The energetic deficit could, in theory, be made good by greatly increased use of imported oil, but in practice this is economically impossible. It would, however, be economically possible to make good that deficit by the use of atomic piles, even of the simpler kind, in which 100 tons of atomic fuel generate as much electrical power as 1,000,000 tons of coal, at roughly the same cost, but especially in one of the so-called 'breeder' type, such as we are about to construct at Dounreay, in Caithness, in which a single ton of atomic fuel does the same, presumably at very much lower cost. The urgency of this development was made clear very recently by the Chairman of the National Coal Board, Sir Hubert Houldsworth, when he said (February 9, 1954):

The danger is that atomic energy will not come soon enough to take the load off coal. I cannot see any danger that it will come too soon.

Another reason why the development of power from atomic energy is most important for Britain was stated succinctly by F. E. Simon, F.R.S., head of the Department of Thermodynamics at Oxford University, in a recent lecture at the University of London:

The export of power stations to other countries may well become of overriding economical importance. To bring the rest of the world up to a power consumption per person of even, say, one-quarter of that of Britain would require nuclear stations costing tens of thousands of millions of pounds. Such power stations would be just the right kind of export for Britain, as they would be an export of brain power,* which is what Britain will have to live on in the future. Very few countries are as favourably placed for this as Britain, which has a profusion of inventive genius, a start of ten or more years over most of the others and an industry big enough to tackle the formidable task. Britain must, under no circumstances, miss this unique opportunity of getting on her feet again. (February 3, 1954.)

This fits in with what Professor Blackett told his viewers:

I am quite convinced that if the British Government could offer half a dozen sixty thousand kilowatt plants for delivery, in running order, in ten years' time, you would get orders from the Australian states absolutely tomorrow. (November 19, 1953.)

It fits in also with the complaint of T. E. Murray, of the U.S. Atomic Energy Commission, on October 22, 1953, in Chicago, that although his Commission had expressed, early in that year, its opinion that it was no less important for the U.S. to win 'the nuclear power race', than to win the atomic arms race, 'there has been very little notice taken of it by the general public'. For he adduced then the argument that, since the U.S. atomic weapons programme depends upon the receipt of substantial quantities of uranium from foreign countries which are 'banking on U.S. "know-how" and U.S. good faith to help them to build their nuclear plants of the future', that atomic weapons programme might be gravely thrown out by lack of foreign uranium, unless the U.S. embark immediately on an all-out attack on her nuclear power programme. Although in these remarks—as also in the June speech of Sterling Cole, Chairman of the Congressional Committee on Atomic Energy, which has received more notice in this country—reference was made only to the possibility that the Soviet Union might be beating the U.S. to it, it can hardly be doubted that the speakers were aware that Britain has certainly done so. While the United States have been cornering the lion's share of the atomic raw materials of the so-called 'free' world and 'sterilising' the uranium extracted therefrom in their stockpile of atomic bombs, Britain, starting with virtually no in-

*By which term he must have meant also, of course, the technical skill of her workers.

formation and with only 20 milligrams of plutonium (enough to cover the head of a pin) from the U.S., has built up the atomic industry which is so brilliantly described in the Stationery Office booklet *Britain's Atomic Factories*. With this new industry she is in a position, not only to overcome her power-deficiency as compared with the U.S., but also to offer power-hungry under-developed countries something which the U.S. cannot offer them, in exchange for their atomic raw materials—atomic power plants.

It is this advantage which is being thrown away by our Government at the present time. One reads in *Britain's Atomic Factories* that, at the time (1946) when the fine products of Britain's engineering industry were being 'clamoured for' all over the country and indeed all over the world, 'it is hardly surprising that Risley (the headquarters of Britain's new atomic industry) found difficulty in buying the equipment and machinery it needed.' Furthermore, 'before it is possible to embark on the construction of a number of breeders (such as that at Dounreay), it is necessary to build up adequate stocks of one or both of the fuels which they require' (plutonium 239, or uranium 233). What are the prospects in these two connections? The Government's *Statement on Defence*, 1954, admits that:

the task of expanding our exports still further will not be eased by the continuing need to devote to Defence production a substantial part of the output of our engineering industry.

The Minister of Works, Sir David Eccles, speaking in the House of Commons on March 1, 1954, about the work of the new Atomic Energy Authority, admits that 'up till now weapons were nine-tenths of the total work' of our Atomic industry, and that 'if we were to concentrate on weapons, we should damage the industrial side' of that industry's work, but nevertheless declares that 'of course, at the moment the production of weapons must remain the major task of the programme.' Every Government spokesman and White Paper endorses Sir John Slessor's demand that the materials required to be banked as fuel for the breeders with which we would 'tomorrow' be first in the export market worth 'tens of thousands of millions of pounds' shall be 'sterilised' in atomic bombs labelled 'Made in Britain.' We may well ask, what are the prospects?

Every atomic bomb we make is not only a dead loss to our country; it means also another lap off the lead we have won over the United States in 'the nuclear power race'—the throwing away of yet another of the few trump cards which, if properly played now, would enable us to face up to our American rivals on equal terms.

THE VOICE THAT BREATHED O'ER EDEN

R. PAGE ARNOT

EVERYONE who follows public events closely and with a clear understanding must have been struck by the utter spinelessness in recent months of Mr. Anthony Eden. This was particularly to be remarked during the recent conference of Foreign Ministers at Berlin. The Foreign Secretary there played the humiliating rôle of mouthpiece for the policies pushed forward by the United States.

But it dates from before the Berlin Conference of February-March. It was noted at the Conservative Party's Conference in October last that not the least mutter of criticism of the U.S.A. came from the lips of Eden, though other Tories were slightly vocal about the transatlantic policies. It was remarked on his earlier appearances after his return from a surgeon's ward in the United States when coarse jests were heard about 'the surgical removal of his backbone'. Churchill's request last May for a meeting of Malenkov and Eisenhower and himself was not echoed at any time by the British Foreign Secretary.

In Berlin Eden's behaviour was a melancholy travesty of what might have been expected from Britain's plenipotentiary at a meeting of such importance. Every morning Eden and Bidault had to meet Dulles, to make sure they were word perfect in their parts before they got up to speak for their side in the afternoon at the Conference. There were four foreign ministers present; but there were only two sides; and the numbers were three to one. Eden was substitute goalkeeper for the Yankee team.

Now of course it could be argued that the Foreign Secretary was only doing his duty in carrying out a policy of subservience that has been officially decided upon by the Cabinet as a whole: and that the subordination of British interests to the needs of a combination dominated by the U.S.A. is no more than the acknowledged purpose of three successive administrations, dating back from Ernest Bevin's adoption of the Churchill line in his Fulton speech eight years ago. But even those who are wedded to this argument must have had an uneasy feeling that Eden was not only doing his duty, but overdoing it a bit. After all, the nature of this unhappy subordination of a

previously fully sovereign state* does not exclude strains and stresses. There is a deep-lying difference of interests between British exporters and their Yankee rivals, who can wield the Battle Act to impede or prohibit British trade in this or that commodity with countries of Europe and Asia. Such a body as the United Kingdom Chamber of Shipping, not one of whose members is a Communist, Left-wing Labour or even a Bevanite, does not lightly raise a complaint that their ships were harried and chased by the chief of the allies, witness their frequent meek acceptance in the last four years of Formosan piracy by the U.S. puppet Chiang Kai-shek on British cargo boats. Examples of this kind are numerous and are to be expected, even by the official exponents of the subordination policy. Equally it is to be expected that the said official exponents will at any rate make a show of indignation, and utter some strong words of protest, if only to keep up their credit with the British public whom they have duped. Churchill, in fact, is an adept at this John Bullishness; at showing his teeth (but not biting) and at barking most musically at friend and foe. But Eden?

The voice of indignant Britons is never heard from him. The Foreign Secretary seems to have his ear tuned only

*To sounds which echo further West
Than your sires' islands of the blest.*

Yet there is a pause, a perceptible pause, before the mounting uneasiness about Eden is voiced openly, either from the Labour benches or within the Tory ranks. Eden has always been fortunate in this respect. Nobody wants to say a word against him. He is so kind, so patently anxious not to give offence, so affable, courteous and gentlemanly. Only army roughs from Cheltenham would put pointed questions to this superb product of Eton and Christ Church in the House. He is, in short and above all, a gentleman: not a 'very great gentleman' as Baldwin called King Edward VIII when he thrust him from the throne, nor a 'gallant Christian gentleman' like the butcher Franco, but simply and superbly 'an English gentleman'. He could go to Moscow in 1935 to talk courteously with Communists: with his manner 'icily faultless, splendidly null', he could nullify in 1936 the canons of international law and thus help Franco by stopping aid to the legal government of the Spaniards: he could in 1936-37 pull the wool over the eyes of the T.U.C. General Council—all as a gentleman. There are grateful recollections on the Labour Party front bench of how he resigned in 1938,

*A state ceases to be fully sovereign when the troops of another power are quartered on its territories in time of peace.

rather than kow-tow like Chamberlain to Mussolini. He made his little stand there, but as Mrs. Monica Felton remarked last month, he did not try to rally support. Anything to upset his colleagues (or his class) would have been beyond the bounds of good breeding. Chamberlain's policy was to lead to battle, murder and sudden death for millions—but Anthony was not involved. His hands, his beautiful hands, were clean.

Today, sixteen years later, Anthony Eden, trooping after Dulles, gives the green light to Adenauer to rearm. Nazis, as came out in the Commons on the Ides of March, may now feel they too have been given the green light, provided what they do is 'done decently'. Good form, after all, is what matters.

As a gentleman, he does not want to do harm to a single soul; and why should any single soul, as a gentleman, dream of harming him—or his policies? This has stood him in good stead for many a long year. Parliamentary opponents, irritated by Lyttelton or Cruikshank, will be soothed by Anthony. International opponents even, in a parody of Chesterton, might sometimes say

*Eden, though an Occidental,
Is a gentleman at least.*

'A gentleman at least'! What a pity other countries cannot follow this model! How much happier, or dopier, we should all be, if only they could! Smoothly, sweetly, soothingly we should slide along, slide along—until we woke up in the third world war. Safer, far, to have our ears assailed by the brutal voice of Dulles, whose loud rattle warns us that American imperialism is a deadly rattlesnake.

Compared with his cabinet colleagues Eden's very appearance wins approval. Nobody pretends that Lyttelton is the sole survivor of Neanderthal Man* to be found amid the British ruling class. Nobody thinks that Churchill is in any way different, except in appearance and experience, from the polo-playing hussar, or the member of the cabinet responsible for the Amritsar massacre, or the virulent despiser of the Indian people crystallised in his abuse of Gandhi as 'a naked fakir'. But Anthony is different; he not only behaves, but looks like a gentleman, and dresses like a gentleman.

Compared to his Tory predecessors, compared with the imperious and easily-nettled Curzon or the crooked Austen Chamberlain (see Field Marshal Lord Wavell's *Life of Field Marshal Lord Allenby*),

*Not the stained Piltown Man: there are plenty other politicians who resemble that fake.

or the shifty Simon—all with their baulked ambitions for the Premiership—Eden seems in a fair way to become the next prime minister. Altogether he conveys that he is harking back to an earlier tradition. Once more, as before the imperialist war of 1914, we seem to see a repetition of Sir Edward Grey. Smoothly, courteously, with winning smiles and impeccable phrases Sir Edward Grey answered all awkward questions and behind our backs he made the secret engagements with France that dragged this country into war, into the slaughter-house of 1914-18. We do not know what secret engagements if any have been made by Eden. The open engagements, subordinating British destinies to N.A.T.O. and reviving German militarism, are terrifying enough. Britain is in a trap.

The trapped bird flutters its wings. Even Churchill ten months ago was proposing a way out of the trap: and Attlee followed him with his flapping. Well-nigh half of the Labour Party in the Commons backed by mounting anger in the Labour movement are now seeking to break out of the trap. But Eden meanwhile has only preened himself, like a domestic pet in the American household. The sly butcher Franco was not so responsive to every demand of Hitler as Eden appears to have been to every proposal put forward from Washington. More than any of his cabinet colleagues, and without the excuse that three of them could make of being half-Yank by descent, Eden gives the impression of willing subservience to the U.S.A. It may be that American influence, already patent for many years in British political intrigues, will be cast in favour of his premiership against his rivals in the Tory Party.

But however that might suit Eden, it would not suit the people of Britain. They, after all, have the final say. The sooner they say it, the better.

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Book Reviews

CHARTISM MISREPRESENTED

Scottish Chartism, by Leslie C. Wright (242 pp. Oliver & Boyd. 21s.)

THERE is an urgent need for regional studies of the Chartist movement. The difference in economic conditions and social structure in the first half of the 19th century produced local and regional movements whose detailed history would throw much light upon many aspects of working-class politics in the Chartist period. The generalisations of the national story have blurred much of the local history, and the Labour movement of today would be immensely encouraged and heartened by a knowledge of the initiative, imagination and courage that were characteristic of the greatest and most sustained mass movement British working-class history has yet known. The promise of a history of Scottish Chartism is especially welcome as working-class history has been so much more neglected in Scotland than England. It must be said at once that this present volume by Mr. Wright, of the University of Edinburgh, represents in no way a contribution to our enlightenment. There may be more confused accounts of the Chartist movement, but they have not yet been written, and it is too often impossible to distinguish between fact and Mr. Wright's fancy.

Mr. Wright, in throwing together this history, has been guided by one simple theme: that in Scottish Chartism there were 'only two real divisions: those who advocated the use of physical force to gain their ends and those who resolved to stick to "constitutional methods".' (p.21.) The voice of the physical force

Chartists was 'loud, unreasonable and violent' whilst the constitutionalists spoke in tones that were 'quiet, logical and peaceful'. (p. 190.) So much for Mr. Wright's own sympathies. Everyone is on one side or the other and events and personalities are assessed in colours that are either white or black. Mr. Wright is thus able to lump together Oastler, Stephens, Harney (an 'avowed revolutionary') and O'Connor as Chartists of extreme views. But the villain of the piece for Mr. Wright is O'Connor, this 'Mephistopheles' whose 'lurid light', 'extremist views' and 'gerry-mandering' was a major factor in the decline of Chartism 'which petered out in a welter of froth and frustration' or, as it is elsewhere expressed 'that it succumbed to a surfeit of rhetoric, pecuniary debility, or even hara-kiri'. Mr. Wright's book, it must be added, is peppered with his version of the apt and striking phrase. Thus, writing of John Taylor, 'a typical Continental revolutionary of the period', Mr. Wright says of him that he was seeking to qualify as the 'Scarlet Pimpernel of the working classes'; when attacks are made upon the Established Church or when O'Brien writes his 'vitriolic outbursts' this is 'yellow journalism'. The chapter headings which open Part 2 of the book, 'Eastern Leadership—or Abstraction' and 'Western Leadership—or Distraction' have a smart-alec quality about them that no doubt much tickled Mr. Wright's intellectual palate, and there is a good deal of this sort of vulgarity in the book.

A re-assessment of Feargus O'Connor is long overdue, and next year, the centenary of his death, offers an opportunity that the Labour movement ought not to miss. Chartist history has been mostly written by Liberals and reformist Socialists and

it is significant with what unanimity O'Connor has been condemned by them as a blustering demagogue and a buffoon. Yet O'Connor remained for a decade the outstanding leader of the Chartist movement, and that fact alone demands a much more serious approach to him than has been made hitherto. He was a brilliant speaker, and, despite a tendency to longwindedness, a very forceful writer. All in all, a superb agitator. Engels in 1847 could recommend to Marx an article of O'Connor's in the *Northern Star* as 'a masterpiece of the genial art of making insults. It is even often better than Cobbett. . . .' Ernest Jones, defending O'Connor's reputation before the Chartist movement in the early 1850s, asked 'who has done so much in creating and organising the democratic mind?' We must, surely, while not minimising the many political mistakes that O'Connor made, bring to our analysis of him the sympathy and seriousness which we give to Harney and O'Brien and the rest. When we have done that, it will no longer be possible for writers like Mr. Wright to dismiss O'Connor in the contemptuous terms noted above.

Returning to Mr. Wright's book, he has laboured under the further handicap that his knowledge of the national politics of the two decades following 1832 is unfortunately meagre. In particular he appears to be ignorant of the general ideas of Radicalism in this period and especially of the crucial differences between middle and working - class Radicalism. Only ignorance could have perpetrated the howler on pp. 78-79 where Mr. Wright prints a programme of reform published in the *True Scotsman* in 1839 among whose points were the abolition of entail and primogeniture, the introduction of a

Civil Code and certain reforms in the Army, including the abolition of degrading punishments and of the purchase of commissions, compulsory education and a reduction in the enlistment period. For Mr. Wright these were ideas 'apparently "borrowed" from out and out revolutionaries' and he is evidently unaware that they were the stock in trade of middle-class Radicals for most of the 19th century. It might even be muttered to Mr. Wright that if he will turn to Book 3, Chapter 2 in *The Wealth of Nations*, he will find the Master himself discussing the iniquities of entail. Mr. Wright's approach to generally established facts is apparently a casual one, for there are many elementary mistakes in this volume. A selection of the additional errors Mr. Wright has committed may not be out of place. Michael Sadler was not representing the Young Tory group in Parliament in 1838 (p. 31) for he had been dead three years and was last in Parliament in 1832. J. R. Stephens at his trial called the Six Points 'a rigmarole in which I never had a share' and cannot therefore be considered to have supported the Charter as such (pp. 31 and 44); the report that John Taylor was in the Newport area at the time of the outbreak in 1839 (p. 62) is dismissed as incorrect in David Williams' biography of John Frost, which is listed in Mr. Wright's bibliography but which he cannot have read very carefully; O'Connor was elected for Nottingham not Northampton (p. 179); the disturbances in Glasgow and Edinburgh were not the first outbreaks of 1848 (p. 185), for on the same day that the riots began in Glasgow, a three-day riot developed in London following the cancellation of the middle-class meeting in Trafalgar Square originally called by Cochrane. The point is not unimportant.

It was this simultaneous rioting against the background of revolutionary France from which developed the hysteria of the middle and upper classes towards the Kennington Common meeting.

One of the reasons why Mr. Wright has produced this wholly unsatisfactory account of Scottish Chartism is that he has relied much too heavily upon secondary authorities and moreover upon a severely limited range of secondary authorities. In particular he has followed Gammage closely for the national story and is apparently unaware that Gammage's *History of the Chartist Movement* is biased, inaccurate and untrustworthy and that it cannot be used as a repository of facts but only as one account by a thoroughly prejudiced participant.

It would, however, be wrong to suggest that Mr. Wright's labours have been wholly in vain. He has performed a useful task in drawing attention to the great traditions of the Scottish working class in the Chartist period and to the wealth of material and sources that exists for the working-class historian. Furthermore, out of the confusion of the book there emerges some indication of the kind of problems that need investigation before an adequate political history of the working classes in Scotland can be written. We need, first of all, a thorough analysis of economic and social conditions. There are clearly some important differences between England and Scotland of which the existence of serfdom among the mining population until the end of the 18th century is only the most striking example. The place of local government in Radical politics, the attitude towards education, the role of the Irish in the Chartist period,

the political relationship between the middle and the working - class Radicals, the leniency of the Scottish judges towards the Chartists of 1848 compared with the harshness of the English courts—on all these and no doubt on many other matters, there would appear to be some divergence from the pattern that is commonly assumed below the Border and which result in a different emphasis within the Scottish working-class movement.

It is to be hoped that the story of Scottish Chartism will soon find its historian.

JOHN SAVILLE

THE BATTLE FOR THE SCHOOLS

Your Children's Future, by Max Morris; *Intelligence Testing and the Comprehensive School*, by Brian Simon. (104 pp. 5s.; 112 pp. 6s., both Lawrence & Wishart.)

THE publication of the programme *British Road to Socialism* marked an important stage in the advance of British Socialism to maturity. Max Morris has brilliantly elaborated one section of this programme. Here we have a scholarly and scientific analysis of the class basis of present-day British Education leading on through a practical programme of immediate demands to the bold outlines of the educational system essential to a People's Democracy. This book has a special value in that it reminds us of something we tend to forget or under-estimate—the primary importance of the 'Battle for the Schools' both in the building of a mass movement and also in the programme of a People's Democracy. 'It is more important than ever', says Morris, 'for the Labour Movement alongside professional and popular organisations to strive for educational advance, to fight not just for the enjoyment of a

right which has never been granted in full but also to vindicate the good name of the majority of the British people, denigrated as being of inferior calibre. When Mr. Churchill sonorously proclaimed "Labour is unfit to govern" he was (in spite of his own recorded failure at school) doing no more than echoing the slander of the Public School men that the working people are unfit to be educated. The two arguments go hand in hand. Let us not under-estimate the importance of these views. *Their prime social purpose is to undermine the confidence of the mass of the people in their ability to control their own destinies—and so secure the perpetuation of class privilege.* (My italics.)

The effect of this class attitude on all the stages of the educational system is described in four short sections packed with facts and figures taken from official sources and supported by quotations from prominent educationists. It is a sorry tale of pious promises and broken pledges, culminating in the recent frontal attacks of the Tory government. 'Rearmament allied to a class policy which fears and hates social advance has dealt a deadly blow to the future of the children.'

On the other hand working-class demand for educational advance has always been strong and enthusiastic.

This enthusiasm was shown during the campaign of the Council of Educational Advance at the end of the second world war, and was shared by the organised teaching profession and many Local Education Authorities. Today it can be revived and directed into the constructive channels outlined under the heading 'The Battle for the Schools'. This book provides in ready form the ammunition for such a campaign. Equally important, the final chapters outline for the first time the essential charac-

teristics of education in a democratic system.

While Morris's book deals with the strategy of educational advance, *Intelligence Testing and the Comprehensive School* by Brian Simon is a tactical study of one and perhaps the most important sector of the enemy's defences. It spotlights the use of intelligence testing as the main defence of selective and restrictive education. It then proceeds to a trenchant exposure both of the philosophic basis and of the dubious practice of the testers. In the next chapter he carries forward to a logical conclusion the series of admissions made in the last few years by some of the most prominent educational psychologists and leaves them stripped and naked to the cold blast of common-sense. And this is done in a simple and lucid style which reveals the author's profound understanding of his theme and enables the layman—both teacher and parent—to see through the cunning camouflage of technical terms and higher mathematics. The final chapter sets out from a new angle the arguments for the comprehensive school as the foundation of a democratic system of education. Altogether a masterly and highly topical contribution to the 'Battle for the Schools'.

G. C. T. GILES.

U.S.S.R. AND GERMANY

Russia and The Weimar Republic, by Lionel Kochan. (190 pp. Bowes & Bowes, 25s.)

WHEN a book is blurbed in this year of cold war 1954 as giving 'the indispensable background . . . to the present position of Germany between East and West'; when, moreover, the Foreign Office, Chatham House and Mr. Isaac Deutscher are thanked for their assistance; and when, finally,

the book is liberally spattered with quotations from Trotsky, Bukharin, Zinoviev, Radek, Ruth Fischer and the like—one expects the worst. It is therefore a surprise to find that Mr. Kochan categorically defines Soviet policy as defensive and not aggressive. Writing of the Soviet-German pact of 1939 he admits that 'it was of course no part of Stalin's design that he would thereby strengthen an aggressor' (p. ix); Soviet policy after 1925 is described as 'pre-eminently defensive in character' (p. 120); and again in the early 'thirties Soviet policy is described as 'fundamentally self-defensive' (p. 156). Thus Mr. Kochan slays the spectre of 'Soviet aggression'.

How then does Mr. Kochan play his part in the cold war?—By artificially inventing a theory that the U.S.S.R. must always endeavour to keep Europe divided. Starting with Chicherin's reference to the Rapallo Treaty as providing the U.S.S.R. with a '*point d'appui*' in Germany, among the capitalist states of Europe, he elaborates this '*point d'appui*' into a sort of fetish, so that 'it was impossible for Russia to be simultaneously on friendly terms with both Germany and Poland' (p. 154) and in the 'thirties 'the Russian need was to find a *point*

d'appui amongst the Western capitalist powers, should the German *point d'appui* give way.' (p. 166). The basic fact, that the U.S.S.R. was prepared to be friends with *both* Germany and Poland; *both* the Governments of France and Britain and Germany; on condition that these states would reciprocate such friendship, is ignored by Mr. Kochan. Moreover, the fact that it was the aggressiveness of France and Poland which forced the Soviet-German line-up at Rapallo; and Germany's aggressiveness that forced the U.S.S.R. to seek mutual assistance pacts with France and Britain; is played down. In this way Mr. Kochan erects the mythical principle of a divided Europe into an alleged essential of Soviet foreign policy, and in this he furthers the cause of the cold war. The facts, of course, show otherwise. The recent Soviet proposal for a European Security Pact is for a *united* Europe, not a divided one. But united in amity with the U.S.S.R. If, between the wars, the U.S.S.R. had alternatively to pursue friendly relations first with Germany and then with Britain and France, the basic cause was the fluctuation in these countries' policies in relation to the Soviet Union.

PAT SLOAN.

PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED

BOOKS

- Film in the Battle of Ideas, by J. H. Lawson. Masses & Mainstream. 126 pp. \$1.00. Collet's London, 8s.
 Peking-Moscow Letters, by Elizabeth Vassilieff. Australasian Book Society. 296 pp. 10s. 6d.
 Historical Materialism, by Maurice Cornforth. Lawrence & Wishart. 216 pp. 10s. 6d.
 The Present as History, by Paul M. Sweezy. Monthly Review Press. 376 pp. \$5.00. Collet's, London, £2.
 I Fought in Korea, by Julian Tunstall. Lawrence & Wishart. 128 pp. 8s. 6d.
 Mao Tse-tung: Selected Works, Vol. I. Lawrence & Wishart. 336 pp. 6s.
 Science and Industry in the Nineteenth Century, by J. D. Bernal. Routledge & Kegan Paul. 230 pp. 12s. 6d.
 J. V. Stalin—Works, Vol. V. Lawrence & Wishart. 454 pp. 5s.
 Claude Helvetius, by Irving L. Horowitz. Paine-Whitman, New York. 196 pp. \$3.00.
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Published by the Proprietors, The Trinity Trust, 134, Ballards Lane, London, N.3, and printed by Wembley News, Wembley, Middlesex, Great Britain. Registered for transmission by Magazine Post to Canada, including Newfoundland.

Doubtless you will at some time or another have glanced at the insides of its cover and will have noticed that it very quietly and courteously draws attention to the impediments to its further development and appeals for a very much wider circulation and if possible a little monetary assistance. It has occurred to me that you might be agreeable as a special occasion to support an effort in the form of a collection and thus help to ensure for ourselves the safeguarding of one of the most internationally famous Communist magazines of the last 30 years'. They came back with 2s. 3d. per head. And we know engineers need that 15 per cent.!

Berlin and the Branch

OUR ARTICLES on Germany, before and after the Berlin conference, have been really valuable, many readers tell us. A *Midlands* reader describes a discussion on Berlin at his trade union branch, where speakers

simply did not know the facts. He asked us to send specimen copies of March with Quæstor's admirable summary *Trying to Save Europe* and the Notes *They First Make Mad* as the quickest way to cut through the confusion. He is enraged at 'honest people being deceived by these crypto-conservatives, and the Party getting lined up behind a Tory foreign policy, for the simple reason that they have never read both points of view'. A *Lancashire* reader, who is in charge of literature display at his monthly trade union branch meeting, comments on the demand for that number; while another Lancastrian describes hearing a Labour Party friend make 'a magnificent speech against German rearmament based on the March L.M. which quite carried the trades and labour council by storm'.

I must leave till next month some vivid accounts of what readers are doing to build circulation. February donations totalled:

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